(d) what steps are being taken by Government to reach education at the residence of children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) As per *"Shiksha Darpan Survey, 2000"* conducted by Government of Rajasthan, about 9.48 lakh children in rural areas and 1.17 lakh children in urban areas, in the age group of 6—14, are not yet enrolled in schools. This is attributed to various socio-economic reasons and lack of access facilities in sparsely populated habitations where schools could not be opened under the eligibility norms of the State Government.

(d) The State Government has formulated various strategies to address the issue of out of school children, which include launching of *"Shiksha Apke Dwar"* compaign under which it is proposed to undertake awareness building activities, opening *"Rajiv Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas"* in remote villages and habitations setting up Alternative Schooling Centres where formal schooling facilities are not available within a distance of 1 km., organising bridge courses for adolescent girls, adoption of Madarsas for providing formal primary education to children from minority community and providing assistance to individuals/voluntary organisations for opening *"Shiksha Mitra"* Centres. Government of India is also supplementing the efforts of the State Government for achieving Universal Primary Education through the schemes of District Primary education Programme (DPEP), Lok Jumbish Project, Shiksha Karmi Project and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Standard of primary education

†1108. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that standard of primary education is constantly declining;

(b) whether any survey at national level has been conducted in this regard; and

(c) if so, the findings thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) The Government at various levels takes continuous steps to improve quality of education and achievement levels of students. Some of the important initiatives being implemented currently include renewal and improvement of primary school textbooks in their approach to learning, content and presentation, large scale teachers training in activity based and competency based pedagogy, setting up block and cluster resource centres to provide support to teachers.

(b) and (c) While no national level survey has been conducted, learner achievement tests have been carried out in mathematics and languages under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) which covers 273 districts in the country. Both Mid-term Assessment Survey in DPEP Phase-I and II and Terminal Assessment Survey in DPEP Phase-I show significant improvement.

AICTE approved engineering colleges in Orissa

1109. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number AICTE approved engineering colleges functioning in Orissa;

(b) the number of seats in different disciplines; and

(c) the number of engineering colleges declared as 'A' grade colleges in the country and in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) As per the information furnished by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), there are 39 AICTE approved engineeing colleges functioning in the State in Orissa.

(b) The number of seats in different disciplines approved by AICTE in engineering colleges in the State of Orissa is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(c) AICTE does not accord any grading to engineering colleges.